

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in the instant application. No claims have been added. No claims have been cancelled. Therefore, upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1-3 remain pending.

Figure 1 had been objected to as failing to have reference numbers and error in arrows for "solve backwards and sort" box. Figure 1 has been amended to reflect output arrows instead of input arrows for \hat{S}_k , Hard Bits and Soft Bits. Reference numbers have also been added to drawings and text of the spec. No new matter was added.

The abstract has been objected to as being too short. Claim one has been summarized in a replacement abstract.

The claims were objected to due to informalities. Claims have been amended to correct the informalities.

While it is believed that the instant response places the application in condition for issuance, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned in order to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted:

/Steven A. Shaw/

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Date

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